

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /007 W
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O 131714Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4944

INFO AMEMBASSY BAMAKO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LAGOS IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS NOUAKCHOTT 0071

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: AFSP MR

SUBJECT: WACASC FLIGHTS FOR NOUAKCHOTT

REF: A. LAGOS 468 B. LAGOS 12492 DEC 18

1. POST IS EXTREMELY UNHAPPY TO LEARN THAT JANUARY WACASC FLIGHT TO NOUAKCHOTT MAY BE CANCELLED (REF A). THIS FOLLOWS CANCELLATION OF DECEMBER FLIGHT AND BRINGS US BACK TO SUPPLY PROBLEMS SPELLED OUT IN NOUAKCHOTT 2511. WE WISH TO RECALL THAT DEPARTMENT APPROVED LAST FEBRUARY "REGULARLY SCHEDULED BIMONTHLY SUPPORT FLIGHTS TO NOUAKCHOTT AS ADJUNCT TO BAMAKO FLIGHT" (STATE 45616).

2. LAST WACASC FLIGHT TO NOUAKCHOTT WAS ON OCTOBER 29. WE ARE NOW INFORMED THAT NEXT FLIGHT MAY TAKE PLACE IN FEBRUARY-- IF OUR ORDER IS SUFFICIENTLY LARGE. AS WE POINTED OUT IN PARA 3 OF NOUAKCHOTT 2511, WE ANTICIPATED THAT OUR ORDER FOR JANUARY FLIGHT WOULD NOT INCREASE APPRECIABLY AND ASKED IF THIS MEANT JANUARY FLIGHT WOULD BE CANCELLED. TWO DAYS BEFORE SCHEDULED ARRIVAL OF PLANE, WE ARE INFORMED THAT WACASC PROPOSES TO DO JUST THIS. FURTHERMORE, WE FORESEE SAME SITUATION ARISING IN CASE OF PROPOSED FEBRUARY FLIGHT. WACASC HAS INFORMED US THAT NOUAKCHOTT PORTION OF BAMAKO/NOUAKCHOTT SPLIT FLIGHT NSST CONSIST OF ABOUT 8,000 TO 9,000 POUNDS (REF B). ALTHOUGH WE HAVE NOT YET BEEN INFORMED WEIGHT OF OUR PRESENT ORDER, WE ARE CERTAIN THAT IT IS WELL UNDER 8,000

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POUNDS. NOR IS IT LIKELY TO INCREASE SUBSTANTIALLY BY

EARLY FEBRUARY. PRESUMABLY, THEN, WE WILL BE INFORMED AT LAST MINUTE BY WACASC THAT FEBRUARY FLIGHT WILL ALSO BE CANCELLED. IN SHORT, OUR SUPPLY SITUATION IS CURRENTLY FACING WORST OF ALL POSSIBLE SITUATIONS. PERSONNEL AT THIS POST CONTINUE TO ORDER SUPPLIES ON ASSUMPTION THEY WILL ARRIVE EVERY TWO MONTHS, ONLY TO BE TOLD THAT SUPPLY FLIGHT IS BEING CANCELLED. BECAUSE PERSONNEL MUST ASSUME FLIGHT WILL ARRIVE AS SCHEDULED, THEY ARE NOT ORDERING SUPPLIES FROM OTHER OVERSEAS SOURCES.

3. WE DO NOT HAVE READY ANSWER TO THIS PROBLEM. WE CANNOT, HOWEVER, CONTINUE TO OPERATE UNDER PRESENT ARRANGEMENT. TIMEFRAME MUST BE ESTABLISHED WHEREIN FLIGHTS ARRIVE IN NOUAKCHOTT ON REGULAR BASIS. WACASC SUGGESTED FLIGHT EVERY THREE MONTHS (REF B). THIS IS FINE AS LONG AS WE CAN BE ASSURED THAT FLIGHT WILL ARRIVE EVERY THREE MONTHS. WE ARE WILLING TO CONSIDER ANY OTHER PROPOSAL AS LONG AS DEGREE OF REGULARITY IS ESTABLISHED, E.G. ADDING DAKAR TO CIRCUIT TO INCREASE ORDERS OR REVISING SHARING ARRANGEMENT WITH BAMAKO.

4. WE WOULD ALSO APPRECIATE INFORMATION AS TO WHO MAKES DECISION TO CANCEL FLIGHT. LATEST PROPOSED CANCELLATION (LALOS 468) WAS SENT ACTION BAMAKO AND INFO DEPARTMENT AND NOUAKCHOTT. WE ARE PARTICULARLY SURPRISED AT LAST-MINUTE NATURE OF PROPOSED CANCELLATION JANUARY FLIGHT SINCE WACASC HAS PRESUMABLY BEEN AWARE OF APPROXIMATE WEIGHT OF NOUAKCHOTT ORDER FOR SEVERAL WEEKS. HANDY SIDE

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